

BALLET TODAY
NOVEMBER 1952

FIVE COMPANIES PICTURED IN CENTRE

BALLET TODAY 1/2



**MEET
READ**

DAVID POOLE on page 14

HISTORY OF SADLER'S WELLS on page 4

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This lovely portrait of Elaine Fifield as Odette, the swan queen, in "Le Lac des Cygnes", is the work of artist Eileen R. Cooke and was created from memories of her stage performance in the role and also, says Mrs. Cooke, "from my television screen which happily gave me several close-ups of her face." Once a dancer herself, Mrs. Cooke is an ardent ballet lover and primarily studied art so that she should be capable, with the help of her own technical knowledge of dancing, to portray ballet in all its aspects.

OUR Commonwealth and Dominions have always been instrumental in supplying many of our great dancers and choreographers. Year by year, the list grows as they come from all parts of the world to join English ballet companies. And the news and articles in this issue of **BALLET TODAY** show that the Union of South Africa has probably sent us more dancers than most.

Nadia Nerina, Alexis Rassiné, David Poole, John Cranko, Patricia Miller and Maryon Lane are all South Africans and now comes Johaar Mosaval from Cape Town, who has joined the Theatre Ballet to take David Poole's place while he visits South Africa for the first time since he left six years ago.

As our reviewer on page 10 reports, 22-year-old Maryon Lane, who comes

from Melmoth, Zululand, South Africa, distinguished herself in her first performance as Odette in *Le Lac des Cygnes*, Act II, at Sadler's Wells last month. And when we saw her take over the part of Echo in *Reflection* three weeks ago we were equally impressed by her performance. Miss Lane, who joined the Theatre Ballet in 1947, was trained in Johannesburg by Pauline Stokes, Faith de Villiers and Reina Hermann and learned traditional Zulu war dances as well as ballet.

On page 9, Nadia Nerina and Alexis Rassiné tell the incident-packed story of their two-months tour of South Africa. Wherever they went, they found appreciative and enthusiastic audiences and so much did they enjoy their tour that they have promised to make another in two and a half years' time.



BALLELOG



On October 12, David Poole left England for a three-months visit to Cape Town, which is also his home town. He will dance with the Cape Town University Ballet Company and will take home with him, not only his own great talents, but three ballets, two of them by South African John Cranko, and one by Frederick Ashton, which have not been seen in South Africa before. South Africa can be proud of her dancing sons and daughters.



We were glad to see Dame Ninette de Valois on October 16 when your Editor attended a luncheon in her honour

Turn to Page 5 for SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

given by Major Davis, chairman and managing director of the Davis Theatre, Croydon, before the special schools matinee by the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

This was the first public appearance Dame Ninette had made since she left the nursing home where she had been ill for some weeks and she received a great welcome from everyone at the luncheon. Mr. Frederick Ashton, Mr. Robert Irving, Sadler's Wells musical director, Miss Nadia Nerina, Mr. Alexander Grant, Mr. John Hart and Mr. Herbert Hughes, general manager, were also there to represent the Company and so were the Mayor and Mayoress

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of Croydon, Mr. F. Harris, M.P. for North Croydon, directors of the Davis Theatre and many well-known people in Croydon including the borough's Chief Education Officer.

The schools matinee was made possible by the financial support of the Croydon Borough Council and the co-operation of the General Administrator of the Royal Opera House and the directors of the Davis Theatre. 3,400 children from schools within the borough were able to be present at only 1s. 9d. each and they saw Margaret Dale and Brian Shaw play the leading roles in a ballet that is always a children's favourite—*Coppelia*.



We shall look forward to seeing the new production of *Le Lac des Cygnes* which will be first presented by the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the Royal Opera House on December 17. This will be the complete version of the ballet and will include the popular waltz which has been omitted from recent Covent Garden productions and some extra traditional dances in act three. New decor and costumes will be by Leslie Hurry. This production will be presented on December 17 at a Gala Performance in aid of the Sadler's Wells Benevolent Fund and the role of Odette/Odile will be danced by Margot Fonteyn.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE AND THE BALLET

By Reginald P. Mander Hon. Archivist of the Vic-Wells Assn.

PART I



Giuseppe Grimaldi and Mrs. Brooker

IT is appropriate that the reconstructed Sadler's Wells Theatre which, incidentally, has recently celebrated the 21st anniversary of its re-opening, should have been the first permanent home of the Sadler's Wells Ballet and is now the home of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. For close on 300 years the ground on which the present playhouse stands has been used for the purposes of entertainment. At various times, the several theatres which have stood on the site have been the scenes of aquatic dramas, pony racing and wire walking exhibitions and on other occasions troupes of dancing and performing dogs have strutted their little hour upon the stage. But, by and large, dancing has always played a great part in the entertainment presented.

In 1683 a Mr. Thomas Sadler, a Surveyor of Highways, discovered a medicinal well in his Clerkenwell garden. This can still be seen at the back of the pit of the present theatre. Soon the sick, the halt and the blind were coming to this well to be cured and Sadler determined to commercialise his dis-

covery. He built on his lawn a long room fitted with a stage, orchestra and seats for those requiring refreshments and provided entertainments. So, as the visitors sat drinking their beer and eating cheese cakes and custard tarts, they were beguiled either by a girl of eleven performing a sword dance —

"And further the mob's admiration to kindle,

She turned on her heel like a wheel on a spindle."

—or by a youth —

"In dancing a jig lies the chief of whose graces and making strange musick-house monkey-like faces."

This was the primitive beginning which was to set the stage for the immortal performances of Joey Grimaldi, Phelps' eighteen years of classical drama and the many seasons of opera and ballet which have been given since 1931. Until 1825 Sadler's Wells was only open in the summer months when the two Patent Theatres, Covent Garden and Drury Lane were closed. Thus, if the Wells management wished, the dancers' services from the two most important theatres in the metropolis could be utilised.

By 1745 the property had passed into the hands of a local builder, Rosoman. Under his regime a considerable amount of dancing and ballet was pre-

sented and a regular ballet master was employed. In 1763 the position was held by a well known dancer, Giuseppe Grimaldi, who was the father of a more famous son. Giuseppe was the son of a Parisian dancer known as "Iron Legs," who had learnt the rudiments of his art on French Fair Grounds. He is said to have come to England in the first instance as dentist to Queen Charlotte, but deserted his royal employment for the stage. After securing a reputation as a classical dancer at both the Haymarket and Covent Garden theatres he became maitre de ballet and principal solo dancer at the Wells. He it was who devised the skeleton dance which became so popular that it was introduced into the greatest of all the old time pantomimes, "Mother Goose." Grimaldi senior was engaged at the Wells from 1764 to 1767. During the early part of the time he appeared there with an English dancer called Aldridge in a ballet version of *The Tempest*.

There was in the corps de ballet at the Wells, a Mrs. Rebecca Brooker, who was the mother of Joey Grimaldi. This troupe also included Joey's sister Mary and her husband, Lascelles Williamson, later ballet master at Astleys.

Giuseppe Grimaldi was a very eccentric character. When, at the time of the Gordon Riots, the mob was demonstrating outside his house, which had no 'NO POPERY' notice displayed outside, he put his head out of an upstairs window and said "Gentlemen, in dis house dere be no religion at all!" When he purchased a garden in the depths of winter he was so impatient to see what it would look like in the summer that he had it decorated with artificial fruit and flowers. He had a great fear of the fourteenth of the month for the devil had appeared to him in a dream and told him that on that date he would come and collect him. Therefore on the fourteenth of each month he had a convivial party of friends to protect him from the onslaughts of his satanic majesty.

On September 19, 1764, several dances were performed at the Wells, some serious, others comic. The classical dancers were Signor Duval, Signor Amori, Signorina Mercedes and Mrs. Preston. In 1765, Rosoman pulled down the old wooden theatre and replaced it with a brick built playhouse. Ten years later James Byrne, formerly of Drury Lane, was the ballet master. He was one of the finest Harlequins of his day and evolved a new costume for the part which became traditional.

formerly an artist dancing this role wore a loose jacket and trousers. Byrne substituted a close fitting white silk costume on to which patches of various colours were sewn and the whole was covered with a profusion of spangles. In 1784 an entertainment was brought out which included a ballet, *The Death and Revival of Harlequin*. This was so popular that it ran the whole season. Nine years later a comic dance, called *The Caledonian Lovers* was seen. Both the principals, Mrs. Parker and Monsieur Dubois, came from the Theatre Royal,

The Last Night but Two.
For the BENEFIT of

Mr. VIALS.

SADLER'S WELLS.

THURSDAY, October the 12th, 1797.

Mercury and the Woodman.

Catawba Travellers;
OR, KIEW NEIKA'S RETURN.

The CONTRAST.
The Cavern of War, and the Temple of Peace.

And for that Night only a Homage by Mr. King
Rope-Dancing, for that Night only.
By Mr. Dubois, and his Grandmother.

OLIO, by Mr. Dighton,
Puppet Shows—Gardens—Lawyers—Doctors—Painters—
Admiral—Actors, &c.—Written by Mr. D. Dighton.

Sadak and Kalafrade;

An old Sadler's Wells Playbill.

Dublin. Dubois was not only a very good dancer but also an excellent actor and a master of the art of mime. He was in addition a very expert rope dancer and on one occasion it was advertised that for one night only he would perform a dance on the slack wire with his grandmother!

In 1798 the whole of the company joined in a ballet divertissement which concluded an entertainment entitled a *Peep at the Wells*. The principals were Miss Bruguire—this was her first appearance at the theatre—and Mr. King.

Ballet in the closing years of the eighteenth century was just as costly to produce at the Wells as it is today. However, in the earlier periods losses were often recouped from profits which accrued from the performances of Signor Scaglioni's Troupe of Dancing Dogs. Probably this is the only case of the performances of two footed dancers being subsidised by the activities of four footed performers!

PART TWO NEXT MONTH

BALLET AT HOME

BERYL GREY, The Progress of a Bal-
lerina by Pigeon Crowle (*Faber, 12/6d.*)

This down-to-earth biography of the Sadler's Wells ballerina will delight Miss Grey's many admirers and give them an insight into the feelings and emotions from childhood of the girl who danced Odette/Odile in the full-length *Le Lac des Cygnes* at the age of 15, who has gone from strength to strength since but has remained simple, unaffected and entirely charming despite her many successes. Illustrated with a wide selection of photos by several photographers, this is a book the youngest ballet student and the oldest ballet lover will enjoy equally. P.F.

AN INTRUDER AT THE BALLET by Monk Gibbon (*Phoenix House, 21/-*).
Here is a most interesting and well-thought-out book, written in a style that is not too erudite for the uninitiated or too low-brow for the confirmed balletomane. The 41 illustrations, too, are well-selected and pithily captioned and the whole presents a clear picture of the ballet world as it is today, the ramifications behind it both in its history and at the present time, and the way to best appreciate and enjoy ballet both as an art and an entertainment. Mr. Gibbon, if I may say so, is no intruder in the world of the dance—he belongs there. P.F.

DANCE AND DRAMA IN BALI by Beryl de Zoete and Walter Spies (*Faber, 63/-*).

The new edition of this remarkable book on Balinese art deals most extensively and authoritatively with the drama and dance ritual which obviously takes a most important and serious place

in the social life of the Balinese community. To the student of Western ballet and drama, this book must provide a most valuable work of reference and a source of many new ideas and approaches to the art of the dance. Except for two, all the photographs (there are 134 of them) are by Walter Spies and a truly wonderful collection they are. N.J.

THE THEATRE BALLET OF SADLER'S WELLS by Roger Wood, commentary by John Hall (*Phoenix House, 7/6d.*)

It is nice to see a book devoted entirely to the Theatre Ballet and, though limited in scope, the photographs in it give quite a good idea of the young dancers and the ballets in which they have appeared. I particularly liked the very natural photographs taken at rehearsals but felt that the book's main fault was that too much importance was given to some ballets and not enough, or, even, none at all to others. P.F.

★ Record

Eugene Onegin: Polonaise (Act 3), Waltz (Act 2) by Tchaikovsky, played by Issay Dobrowen and the Philharmonia Orchestra. (H.M.V. C.4190)

If you have seen the new production of *Eugene Onegin* at Sadler's Wells, or even if you have not, your feet will not be able to resist tapping to the rhythm of this delightful waltz and the stately Polonaise. This fine rendering, which includes the two main dancing items in the opera, brings out to the full the life and harmony of both pieces. P.F.

Next issue a special feature will be devoted to full reviews of the new long-playing ballet records—and details of how to get your gramophones adapted for 45 and 33½ r.p.m. records.

COLOUR ★ ★
★ **COLOUR ★**
★ ★ **COLOUR**

MEET BERYL GREY IN COLOUR!

Next issue will be the first ever colour issue of "Ballet Today"!

Our covers and centre will be entirely in full colour and will include a beautiful 1953 calendar for ballet lovers to make. These exciting colour pictures are by Gordon Anthony. See inside back cover for more good news.



(Photo: Gordon Anthony)

New-Ballet Company Will Perform Contemporary Work

THE New Ballet Company has been formed, under the artistic direction of Antoinette Wijnberg and Patrick Harvey, with the object of presenting an entirely new repertoire of contemporary ballets. The ballets, by noted choreographers, are widely varied in subject and style, and are designed to appeal to modern audiences. All are new works specially created for the Company which is now in rehearsal for an out-of-town November opening. The Company is being administered by Mark Marvin.

In place of such traditional classical ballets as *Les Sylphides* and *Le Lac des Cygnes*, the programmes will open with one of the new romantic ballets—*Ballade* by Frank Staff to music of Gabriel Faure and decor by Hugh Stevenson, or Walter Gore's new work with decor by Ronald Wilson. In addition, each of these choreographers has created a second work for this repertoire: *He Was Her Man* by Frank Staff has music by Patrick Harvey and designs by Hugh Stevenson and Walter Gore's *Street Games* will be seen with decor by Ronald Wilson. *A Touch of the Sun* and another short ballet by An-

toinette Wijnberg, *The Story of a Man* by Sigurd Leeder, and *Quadrille*, a comic ballet by Jack Carter, complete the two programmes which the Company will present.

The music will be played on two pianos by Philip Levi and Patrick Harvey and, to provide contrast, electronic keyboard instruments will be used in addition to the pianos.

The dancers include Angela Bayley, Elizabeth Christie, Constance Garfield, Margaret Kovac, Shelagh Miller, Antoinette Wijnberg, Alan Baker, Nigel Burke, Jack Skinner and Kenneth Smith.

Michael Charnley has been commissioned by Festival Ballet to create for the Coronation a two-act ballet, *Peer Gynt*, which, Charnley tells us, will have an entirely new suite of music written for it. He has also undertaken the choreography of the pantomime "Babes in the Wood" which the Players Theatre is presenting for five weeks at Christmas.

Another Ballet Company?

We hear that on November 14 and 15 a group of six dancers headed by Walter Gore and his wife, Paula Hinton, are to give performances at the repertory theatre at Basingstoke. In addition to Gore and Hinton, Domini Callaghan, Michel de Lutry, Hazel Wiscombe and Marjorie Woodhams are in the group. Is this the start of a new permanent company?



Noelle de Mosa who had been unable to dance for the last six months on account of an operation on her foot has now completely recovered and will again appear in all her parts with the Ballets Jooss, Folkwang-Tanztheater der Stadt Essen. For the first time after all those months she will do so in the gala performance in the Essen Opera on September 22, given in honour of the 20th anniversary of the Paris premiere of *The Green Table*.

FORTHCOMING BALLET

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET	
(Royal Opera House)	
Nov. 15	Les Sylphides
(matinee and evening)	Don Juan
	Symphonic Variations
	Three Cornered Hat
Nov. 17	Ballet Imperial
	Apparitions (Revival)
Nov. 21	Job (Revival)
	Three Cornered Hat
	Apparitions
	Job
Nov. 22	Les Patineurs
(matinee)	Apparitions
	Ballet Imperial
Nov. 25	Sylvia (Fonteyn, Sones, Hart, Grant)
Nov. 26	Sylvia (Nerina, Rassiné, Field, Grant)
Nov. 28	Sylvia (Grey, Chatfield, Field, Melville)
Nov. 29	Sylvia (Elvin, Field, Hart, Vernon)
(matinee)	

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE	
BALLET	
(Provincial Tour)	
Fortnight beginning October 27:	Grand Theatre, Leeds
Week beginning November 10:	Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield
Week beginning November 17:	New Theatre, Hull
Week beginning November 24:	Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham
Week beginning December 1:	New Theatre Royal, Norwich
Week beginning December 7:	Re-open at Sadler's Wells Theatre

INTERNATIONAL BALLET	
Nov. 3 - Nov. 8	Pavilion, Bournemouth
BALLET RAMBERT	
Programme at People's Palace, London (week beginning Nov. 10): Mon., Tues., Wed. — Nutcracker Suite, Plaisance, House of Cards, Bar Aux Folies-Bergere. Thurs., Fri., Sat.—Les Sylphides, Winter Night, Judgment of Paris, Facade.	
Fortnight beginning Dec. 1:	Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, London
Week beginning Dec. 15:	Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey

BALLET LEGAT	
Week beginning November 3:	Hull
Fortnight beginning November 10:	King's Theatre, Hammersmith, London

After its five week tour of Italy, which included visits to the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, La Scala, Milan, and the Fenice Theatre, Venice, the Festival Ballet will probably give some performances in France for a week or two. The Company will then return to England for a short holiday before opening for a 21-day season at Festival Hall on Boxing Day, December 26. At the end of this run, they will start an extended provincial tour of the British Isles.

Cheaper Matinee Prices at Royal Opera House

The Royal Opera House has just announced reduced prices for future ballet matinees. They are: boxes, grand tier (4 persons), £4/4/-; (evening £5/5/-); boxes, balcony-tier (4 persons) £3/3/- (evening £4/4/-); orchestra stalls, 15/-, 12/6 (evenings 19/-, 16/6); stalls circle, 15/-, 12/6, 10/6 (evenings 19/-, 16/6, 14/6); grand tier 17/- (evening £1/1/-); balcony stalls, 12/6, 9/- (evening 15/-, 11/6); amphitheatre stalls, 9/-, 7/6, 5/- (evening 10/6, 8/6, 7/-); amphitheatre slips 4/- (evening 5/6); gallery and gallery slips, 3/- (evening 4/-).

Also announced is the fact that from the opening of the autumn ballet season on November 15, evening performances of ballet will now begin at 7.30 p.m., instead of 7 p.m. as hitherto.



Tamara Toumanova will be guest ballerina at La Scala, Milan, during March, April and May, 1953.



On November 22, Michel de Lutry and Domini Callaghan will appear on television in the Vic Oliver show and will, by special request, perform a ballet to part of the Grieg Piano Concerto which they gave in a previous show.

VIOLETTA ELVIN TO DANCE AT LA SCALA, MILAN

FROM Leonide Leonidoss, the famous Paris impresario, who was in London for three days during October, came the news of the invitation extended to Violetta Elvin to dance as guest ballerina at La Scala, Milan, for nine weeks from the end of November until the end of January. Miss Elvin has been granted leave of absence from the Sadler's Wells Ballet for this period.

During her visit, which has been arranged by Mr. Leonidoss and Mr. Leon Heppner, Miss Elvin will dance leading roles in *Ballet Imperial*, Poncielli's *The Dance of the Hours*, Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, possibly *Le Lac des Cygnes* and *Mam'zelle Angot*. The last will be re-mounted for her by its choreographer Leonide Massine who, with another famous choreographer, Millos, will be at La Scala during her appearances and may possibly create a ballet specially for her.



Violetta Elvin, who has just completed her part in the film "The Life of Melba," ties her shoe on the set of "Twice Upon a Time," her earlier film, which is due to be issued shortly.

Do you know that you can have a copy of this beautiful photograph FREE, or any of our photos by Derek Allen or Dudley Harris if you become a subscription reader or introduce a new reader to **BALLET TODAY**? For each new subscription you send you will receive one free picture of your own choice. You will find a subscription form on page 3 of the cover.

(Photo: Derek Allen)

Mosaval Joins S.W.T.B.

Yet another South African has joined the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. He is taking David Poole's place while he is on his three-months' visit to South Africa and is Cape Town born Johaar Mosaval, aged 24. Mosaval was, like Poole, trained by Dulcie Howes in Cape Town and has been in England nearly two years. He joined the Theatre Ballet just before the end of last season and played Poole's famous "Jasper, the pot boy" in *Pineapple Poll* for the first time at the New Theatre, Oxford, a week or so ago when the Company appeared there for a week.

It is expected that Spanish dancers Rosario and Antonio will also be dancing during this season but if, as now seems likely, they have separated by then and are unable to appear, Massine and Elvin will dance in their place, giving a performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*. Miss Elvin will not dance *Coppelia* as was previously announced.

Before Violetta Elvin leaves for Italy, she will have completed her second important film part. A large part of the film, "The Life of Melba," in which Patrice Munsel takes the part of the famous singer and which also has Robert Morley and Alec Clunes in the cast, was made on the stage at the Royal Opera House and round the environs of Covent Garden. Directed by Lewis Milestone and produced by Sam Spiegel (who made "African Queen"), the film is in technicolour and Miss Elvin will appear as Madame Taglioni in a ballet sequence from Meyerbeer's opera "Robert the Devil." In the ballet she will dance the role of the evil Abbess, as Taglioni did many years ago. Choreography of the ballet is by Pauline Grant. It is a Horizon Film and, will be released by United Artists.

Atishoo!

Just before the Company went on its provincial tour we had a chat with Alexander Grant of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. He was unfortunately suffering a very bad cold at the time and told us between sneezes that it is a distinctly draughty job being the statue of Eros in *Sylvia* on the Covent Garden stage! For his part in *Sylvia* he wears the bare minimum of clothing and has to stand absolutely still without stirring for most of the first act. Needless to say, that was not exactly easy with a cold in the nose and not feeling very warm into the bargain! Nevertheless, when we saw him play the part he was still a completely "sneezeless statue."



(Photo: Lemoine)

Joan Cadzow, formerly with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, danced with Les Ballets de Marigny in Paris recently, taking part in "L'Ecuyere," a pas de deux from "Le Lac des Cygnes" with Miskovitch and in "Rendezvous Sentimental" with Jean Blanchard with whom she is seen here.

NEWS FROM PARIS

The Paris season opened on a Spanish note. There is nothing very good to be said for the pompously entitled spectacle *Spanish Caravan*, which played at the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre. Paquita Leon and her troupe wished to transport us to Spain. But her show had no artistic value, and, what is really serious, lacked rhythm and colour.

★ ★ ★

Serge Lifar will arrange the dances for *Tannhauser* to be revived at the Paris Opéra on February 13, which Wieland Wagner will stage.

★ ★ ★

Before the end of the year Roland Petit will create a ballet at the Opéra. M. Maurice Lehmann has had several discussions with the choreographer of *Carmen*, who will dance in some performances with Renée Jeanmaire as partner. The music has not yet been chosen; there is talk, however, of Offenbach.

★ ★ ★

Jean Babilée has just created for television a ballet entitled *Le Poignard*. Xenia Palley and Serge Perrault danced with him.

F.R.

Britain's first stereoscopic ballet film "The Black Swan", featuring Beryl Grey and John Field, is attracting big audiences wherever it is shown. It has been seen by more than 100,000 people at the Battersea Festival Gardens since May of this year and was retained in the cinema there by public demand. It has had large audiences and much interest in Paris, where it is playing in a cinema on the Champs Elysees, and in other cities of Britain and the Continent.

NOVERRE AND MODERN BALLET

BALLET in the 18th century.

For most of us that phrase brings to mind a picture of stylised court dancing designed as a form of relaxation—rather like the famous Brandenburg concertos—to please prince-electors and noblemen; something to bridge the gap between their arduous round of social amusement and affairs of state. "Dramatic" ballet is surely a much later innovation, finding its complete expression in *Giselle*, and developing, through the Diaghileff tradition, to the full-blooded modern dance dramas which are really plays in which speech is replaced by mime and music.

But those of us who believe these to be the facts are labouring under a delusion. If you study the works of the Chevalier Noverre you will realise that the true "classical" ballet, with its subordination of dramatic action to display of dancing, was probably merely an interlude. Noverre, although writing in the eighteenth century, appears to have been the original creator of what we now know as "twentieth century ballet." A friend and collaborator of the great Shakespearean actor Garrick, he considered that dancers should 'speak with all the passions of man.' After an early production at Drury Lane of a ballet in the old style, *The Chinese Festival*, 'A New Grand Entertainment of Dancing'—later referred to by Noverre as 'the least successful of all the ballets I have composed'—which was ill-received, partly owing to political factors, Noverre resolved to adhere to 'dances of the passionate and feeling class.'

The content, indeed, of Noverre's scenarios which remain are of a melodramatic nature. Mainly based on classical mythology, a certain archetypal situation, familiar to the audiences of the old silent films, namely the rescue of the hero or heroine at the crucial moment from almost certain death, is common to most of them. Thus in *Danaïds*, Lynceus about to be immolated in the city centre of Argos, is freed by a popular uprising. In *Rinaldo and Armida*, Rinaldo is saved

by A. P. Perrin

from the fatal allurements of the sinister Princess Armida with the aid of a magic mirror and his fellow knights. In *Alceste*, Alceste is rescued from self-destruction by the timely arrival of Apollo 'in a cloud of glory accompanied by the Arts.' In the *Horatii and Curiatii*, Horace, awaiting death, is 'relieved for the murder of his sister, whom he has understandably killed in a moment of stress after learning that she had



GEORGES NOVERRE " . . . he stares across the space of two centuries with a placid, benign expression."

become infatuated with the champion of the enemies of the Roman Republic. In *L'Amour Corsaire, ou L'Embarquement pour Cythère*, a ballet which has a particularly macabre twentieth century Champs-Elysée flavour, a group of fugitives, wrecked on an island peopled by misogynists, just escape ritual sacrifice through the arrival of the God of Lovers 'in a well-appointed ship.'

Although believing that ballet should

speak the language of feeling, and in many ways a precursor of that Romantic Revival which was to convulse European art and letters in the nineteenth century, in character Noverre does not appear to have conformed to the conventional (Romantic) conception of the artist. Neither afflicted by 'Weltschmerz,' nor torn by inner conflicts, he was of the pyknic type of genius, aggressive and forceful, in this way similar, if in others dissimilar, to Beethoven.

Obviously slightly corpulent, from a contemporary print he stares across the space of two centuries with a placid benign expression. He was described as 'le petit Noverre,' and 'a passionate little fellow,' who would become over-bombastic as a result of a glass of wine. His wife, who wrote an angry letter on the subject of finances to Garrick, appears to have shared his disposition. Noverre was no time-server. Although appointed 'maître des fêtes' to Marie Antoinette at the Trianon, he patriotically refused to side with 'The Austrian Woman,' in the conflict between Gluck and the French-style musicians. Again, in a way reminiscent of the anecdotes about Beethoven, Noverre revolted against the eighteenth century tradition which regarded the artist as an adjunct of the domestic apparatus of the great household. He went so far as to snub an over-imperious minister who was incensed at having to summon him three times.

Indisputably part of the great revolutionary bourgeois upsurge which was to engulf the 'ancien régime,' the seeker after social content will however to a certain extent be disappointed in both the scenarios and principles of Noverre. Although he advocated a study of the movements of workmen, he was opposed to 'too much peasant dancing,' and sensibly avoided getting mixed up in the French Revolution.

In keeping with his general character, Noverre himself was of an intensely practical nature. He had a good knowledge of stagecraft, and was technically ingenious. To present the illusion of a vanishing hunt he hit upon the device of grading the corps de ballet by size, and making them walk across the stage in alternating lines. In *L'Amour Corsaire* a number of 'stills' were procured by Cupid casting several spells over the belligerent misogynists, thus creating a series of petrified pictorial groupings. To aid his choreography, Noverre made a copious study of anatomy with a veterinary professor at Lyons. He was also interested in the architectural construction of theatres, and worked out a

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(Photo: Jane Plotz)

By Jet to South Africa

Sadler's Wells Ballet's

NADIA NERINA

and

ALEXIS RASSINÉ

tell the story of

their two months

ballet tour of

South Africa

WHEN we left England on Monday, June 2, the first dancers to fly in the newly launched jet Comet to South Africa, we were both very excited for two reasons. Firstly, we had neither of us been home or seen our families for a very long time and, secondly, we were both looking forward with keen anticipation to the ballet tour of South Africa which we were to make in conjunction with the African Consolidated Theatres, a huge organisation which controls almost every cinema in South Africa—there are very few pure theatres there.

We arrived in Johannesburg on Tuesday, June 3, less than 23 hours after we left London—an incredibly short time—and were met by our families, who gave us a terrific welcome, as you can imagine. We were also met at the airport by scores of press people, photographers and ballet fans of all kinds. During all the time we were in South Africa we were invited to receptions given by the mayors in the various towns we visited and found everyone very kind and very appreciative.

Throughout our tour we were fortunate

in having with us Adelaide Newman (a well-known concert pianist in South Africa) and Gordon Beasley who accompanied all our dancing on two pianos, and Erik Kristen as our manager. Erik, who is a Dane, was "supplied" by Consolidated Theatres, and is a very interesting and helpful person with a fine knowledge of dancing, staging and stage-craft generally. When the musical show "Oklahoma" was in London, it was Erik who trained and produced the dancing numbers and when it toured South Africa, he himself was the leading dancer in it.

Once in Johannesburg, we rehearsed together for a fortnight before giving our first performance and on June 16 we opened at the Empire Theatre, Johannesburg, for a fortnight's season, during which time we gave eight performances. Our repertoire consisted of two programmes which we gave alternately. (a) programme consisted of an eight-minute excerpt from *Les Sylphides* (arranged, as were all the items, by ourselves to suit two dancers), five solos each, and six pas de deux including *Coppelia*, Act 3, *Casse Noisette*, *Le Lac des Cygnes*, Act 4 and the whole of *Le Spectre de la Rose*. This last was

Above beautiful Victoria Falls, South Africa, flies the B.O.A.C. jet comet in which Nadia Nerina and Alexis Rassiné flew home.

performed before very beautifully designed scenery specially made for us in Johannesburg and we later took this set to Cape Town with us. All the other items were given before black draped curtains relieved by clever lighting. (b) programme included *Les Sylphides*, *Blue Bird pas de deux*, a good deal of *Le Lac des Cygnes*, Act 2, a pas de deux from *Giselle*, *Aurora's Wedding* and *Le Spectre de la Rose*. Between each item we allowed ourselves four minutes to change. At the first performance and at every one we gave in South Africa we received most encouraging response and enthusiasm and broke

Continued on page 21

And here is what some of the South African Press thought of the two dancers :

"... The solo dances from *Coppelia* and the grand pas de deux from Act 3 had pertness, humour and gaiety, created the necessary bond between dancers and audience and from that point it was roses and rapture all the way, until the splendid finale of *Le Spectre de la Rose*."—**Johannesburg Star**.

"... she is a dancer who looks as if she really loves to dance ; her vitality, personality, elegance and technique have endeared her to ballet lovers in many lands . . . Rassiné is recognised as the ballerina's perfect partner."—**Cape Argus**.

"... they have taken the Rand by storm."—**Natal Daily News**, Durban.

"... Highlight was the excerpt from *Swan Lake* and the black swan pas de deux. Nerina delighted with her graceful preening movements, beautifully expressing both queenliness and submission. . . . Rassiné was brilliant . . . both gave most polished performances, precise, strong and technically satisfying."—**Pretoria News**.

"... Brilliant ballet by Nerina and Rassiné. . . . At the end so tremendous was the applause, it seemed as if the audience would never let them go."—**Natal Mercury**, Durban.

"... (in *Casse Noisette*) the first 32 fouettés for 11 years on Cape stages. Nerina flicked through them with the greatest ease."—**Cape Times**.



WELCOME BACK TO DON JUAN AT COVENT GARDEN

Covent Garden. September 18. Sadler's Wells Ballet. *Mam'zelle Angot*, *Don Juan*—revival (choreography by Frederick Ashton, music by Richard Strauss, costumes and scenery by Edward Burra), *Bonne-Bouche*.

THE very welcome revival of *Don Juan*, which has not been danced since Robert Helpmann left the Company, had Violetta Elvin, John Hart and Svetlana Beriosova as principals in the roles originally created by Margot Fonteyn, Helpmann and Moira Shearer.

The ballet still retains its choreographic completeness, fitting so well into Strauss's music and it is aided by Burra's beautiful costumes and effective scenery. Violetta Elvin was a fine *La Morte Amoureuse* and brought the appropriate cruelty and scintillation to a

role which was a complete contrast to the softness and defencelessness of Beriosova's young wife. This young dancer once again proved her virtuosity and brilliance and gave a performance of rounded elegance and charm. John Hart's *Don Juan* was, I felt, not quite dramatic and feeling enough, though his dancing, as always, was of very high standard. Perfect teamwork from all completed a satisfying whole.

It was good to see Nadia Nerina, dancing, I think, for the first time since her return from South Africa, bring youthful abandon and puckish fun to the title role in *Mam'zelle Angot*. Alexander Grant was once again a delightful barber and Kenneth Melville (the caricaturist) and Julia Farron (the aristocrat) gave good performances, but this seems such a muddled ballet, especially in the last scene, and always palls on me long before the end.

A New Odette

Sadler's Wells. September 19. Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. *Le Lac des Cygnes*, Act II, *Ile des Sirènes* (choreography by Alfred Rodrigues, music by Debussy, decor and costumes by Loudon Sainthill), *Jota Toledana*, *Tritsch-Tratsch*, *La Fete Etrange*.

On September 19 your critic went to Sadler's Wells, as I am sure did many other people, primarily to see the first performance in London of *Ile des Sirènes* which was originally created for the Fonteyn-Helpmann Concert Tour of 1950. I knew I should enjoy the rest of the programme—one nearly always does at Sadler's Wells—but I did not think the items would be worthy of especial notice. It was all the more exciting and surprising, therefore, to find the first item on the programme very notable indeed and to be one of an audience that, from being gently appreciative of a nicely presented *Swan Lake*, Act II, suddenly stiffened in their seats as they saw the creation of a new and very different Swan Queen.

It was 22-year-old Maryon Lane's first appearance in one of the most exacting of all classic roles and the wistfulness and feeling that she brought to it, coupled with a very high technical standard, was a delight to watch. Here was no proud Odette, every inch a regal queen, rather was it a very young royal lady, only just out of the cygnet stage, her feathers still fluffy, her wings still soft. Ably partnered by David

Poole as Prince Siegfried, Miss Lane gave us a performance that we shall not forget. There is no doubt that this young dancer has much to offer in the future. I shall watch her progress with interest.

Ile des Sirènes, reminding me of *Giselle*, Act II, under the sea, is the tale of a half-drowned mariner who is lured to his death by a number of lovely and wicked sirens led by their evil queen. Danced to a large portion of Debussy's *Petite Suite*, there were a number of very lovely moments in this ballet, particularly the feeling that one got of the movement of water and the eerie half-light that the effective grotto scenery implied. David Blair as the unfortunate *Palinurus* and Elaine Fifield as the siren queen gave fine performances and equally so was the teamwork of the six dancers who were her attendant sirens.

I liked this ballet; it has feeling and plenty of movement. My main criticism is that the theme is now rather a hackneyed one and the story was not always as clear as it should be.

Love from Judy

Saville Theatre. September 25. *The Nightmare Ballet* from "Love from Judy" (choreography by Pauline Grant, music by Hugh Martin, scenery and costumes by Berkeley Sutcliffe).

"Love from Judy" is a really delightful musical comedy based—and very little changed—on Jean Webster's famous story "Daddy Longlegs." The

nightmare which Judy has, when all her past miseries come together to taunt her, and in which dancers take the places of the chief characters is a very neat piece of choreography indeed and is danced quite well by the small corps de ballet and particularly well by Irene Claire as Ballet Judy and Rex Reid as Ballet Jarvis. I thought, too, that Thane Bettany, who danced the dashing soldier with the long moustaches, deserved more mention in the programme than the fact that he was one of the "dancing boys."

Sparkling Coppelia

Covent Garden. September 27. Sadler's Wells Ballet. *Coppelia*.

The last night of the Company's season marked the real debut of its newest member, Svetlana Beriosova. Dancing the role in which many ballet-goers admired her most when she was with the Theatre Ballet, she gave a performance which held her audience spell-bound and which received a greatly merited ovation at the end of the ballet. I have seen Beriosova dance *Swanilda* a number of times at Sadler's Wells, but her first rendering of it at Covent Garden was by far the most outstanding performance she has given. She brought to it humour, daintiness, technical brilliance and a feeling of "theatre" which it is unusual to find in so young a dancer, and she carried her audience with her into the land of make-believe. There can be no doubt that if she progresses at her present pace, she will go from strength to strength.

Altogether this performance of *Coppelia* was a very fine one. Special praise must also go to Leslie Edwards for his tragi-comic Dr. Coppélius, to Julia Farron's Prayer and to Rowena Jackson's Aurora.

Gore and Hinton in Ballet Workshop

Ballet Workshop. October 5. Mercury Theatre, Notting Hill Gate. *Bagatelle* (choreography by Michael Chanley, music by Howard Ferguson, costumes by Henry Graveney), *Five Variations with a Theme* (choreography by Alex Martin, music by Michael Hobson, decor and costumes by Tom Lingwood), *Peepshow* (setting and choreography by Walter Gore, music by Jean Françaix).

The outstanding event of the first performance of Ballet Workshop's new season was the first appearance since their return from their Australian tour of Walter Gore and Paula Hinton. Aided and abetted by Michel de Lutry, they presented a piece of balletic fun.

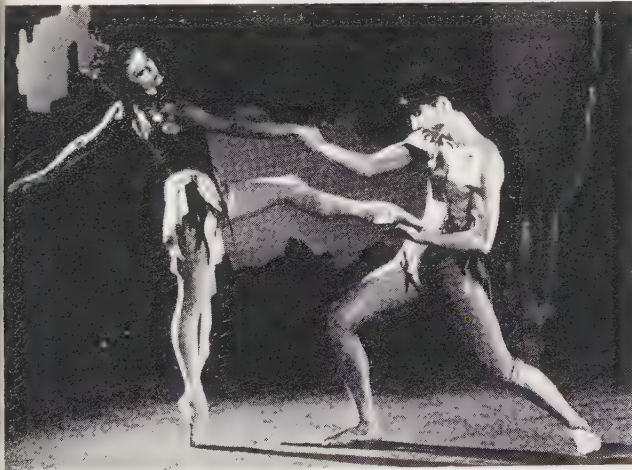
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Our Bouquet of the Month goes to Maryon Lane of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet for her lovely, new interpretation of Odette, the swan queen, in "Le Lac des Cygnes" Act II, on September 19. She is seen here in a graceful movement from the ballet. (Photo: Derek Allen)



(above right) The feeling of moving water is strongly stressed in this photograph of part of the Theatre Ballet's "Ile des Sirènes" which was also given its London premiere on September 19. In the picture are David Blair as Palinurus, the mariner, Elaine Fifiield as the leading siren and her attendant sirens; Maureen Bruce, Margaret Hill, Sara Neil, Annette Page, Doreen Tempest and Pauline Wadsworth. (Photo: Denis de Marney)



(left) The leading siren lures the mariner to his doom—Elaine Fifiield and David Blair in a tense moment from "Ile des Sirènes." (Photo: Denis de Marney)

(below) The Nightmare Ballet from the new musical comedy "Love from Judy" at the Saville Theatre. Pigtailed "Ballet Judy" (Irene Claire) is seen in the foreground. (Photo: Houston Rogers)

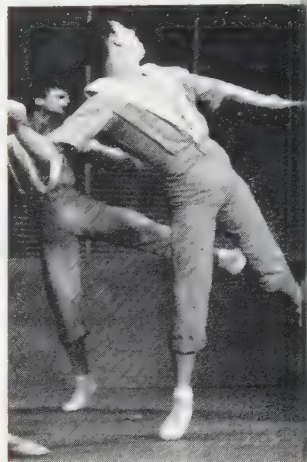


PICTU



(left) Svetlana Beriosova is pictured here as the young wife in a supplicating movement from the ballet "Don Juan" which has recently been revived by the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

(Photo: Derek Allen)



Ursula Rasica, our Yugoslavian correspondent, reports that on September 21, the National Theatre of Zagreb produced for the first time the ballet "Les Tableaux de L'Exposition (Pictures at an Exhibition)", music by Musorgsky, choreography by Oscar Harnos. It was a most interesting performance because, although Musorgsky's music is well suited to dancing, "Les Tableaux de L'Exposition," is seldom produced in full.

Oscar Harnos was very much attracted by the music and he gladly undertook this difficult task. He says that the 'pictures' being so short, he had to be very concise and clear in the interpretation of the subject and in recreating the atmosphere of this music. The well-trained corps de ballet helped to complete a harmonious piece of work. Most of the young dancers

in it were pupils of Ana Roje and Oscar Harnos. The ballet-goers deservedly gave the ballet a great reception. Our picture shows one of the scenes from the ballet.

Ana Roje and Oscar Harnos, the leading dancers of the National Theatre in Zagreb since 1945, are extremely active in all fields of ballet, in dancing, creating new ballets and teaching the young. Most of the young generation of dancers have been brought up by Ana Roje and Oscar Harnos. They are shortly leaving again for London, in order to continue their work at the Legat School where they originally trained and later were teachers, and they are expected to give several performances during this winter season. We are looking forward, says Mrs. Rasica, to seeing them in March, 1953, in Zagreb.

(Photo: Foto Sluzba)



THE PAGE

This month, Picture Page presents dancers from five different ballet companies in poses varying from the classic of *Les Sylphides* to the modern of *Symphony for Fun*.



(above) The thrill and abandon of Festival Ballet's youthful "Symphony for Fun" is shown in the whirling figures of Noel Rossana and John Gilpin who take two of the three leading roles in Michael Charnley's ballet.
(left) Another scene from "Symphony for Fun" which is full of the humour, joyousness and swiftness of the young people of today.

(Both photos: Roy Round)

★

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(left) A new study, by Derek Allen, of Claudie Algeranova, one of the principal dancers in the International Ballet which is appearing at the Pavilion, Bournemouth, during the first week of this month.
(below) 18-year-old Beryl Goldwyn, in "Les Sylphides." She is one of the leading dancers of Ballet Rambert which comes to the People's Palace, London, on November 10.

(Photo: R. Wilsher)



An Actor

UNTIL he was nearly 19 he had not danced a step or attended a ballet class—more than that, he had not even *seen* a ballet performed—yet, now, only eight years later, he is one of the leading male dancers of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and has been since 1948!

Born and brought up in Cape Town, South Africa, David Poole, the eldest of seven children, decided when he was seven that he wanted to be a schoolmaster. So, when his normal school-days were over, he went to a Cape Town teachers' college to train as a general teacher, specialising in art. At 18, he took his first post and prepared to settle down quite happily to a life's work educating the future generation.

When you are training, money is often short, so, to earn a little extra, David did part-time work at the Cape Town Concert Hall acting as an usher during performances of the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra. When he left college he continued with this part-time work since he liked it, and one day was asked if he would mind being an usher at a ballet performance, to be given at the concert hall, for which the Symphony Orchestra was playing. To oblige them, he said he would, though, having never



ROLES DAVID POOLE HAS DANCED WITH THE SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Master of Treginnis:	The Haunted Ballroom
Pierrot:	Carnaval
*Golliwog:	Children's Corner
*Sailor:	Tritsch-Tratsch
*The Beast:	Beauty and the Beast
The Other Man and the Lover:	Vagabonds
Old Man:	Khadra
*Skipper:	Sea Change
Mr. Taylor:	The Prospect Before Us
Nobleman:	The Gods Go A-Begging
*Melanthus:	Pastorale
Poet:	Selina
Country Boy and the Bridegroom:	Le Fete Etrange
Cavalier and the Elderly Gentleman:	Assembly Ball
Pugilist:	Mardi Gras
Prince Siegfried:	Le Lac des Cygnes
*Jasper:	Pineapple Poll
*Narcissus:	Reflection
Dr. Coppelius:	Coppelia
Tailor:	The Rake's Progress

Has also danced leading roles in *Valse Nobles et Sentimentales*, *Les Rendezvous*, **Etude*, *Facade*, *Trumpet Concerto*, *Parures* and *Harlequin* in April.

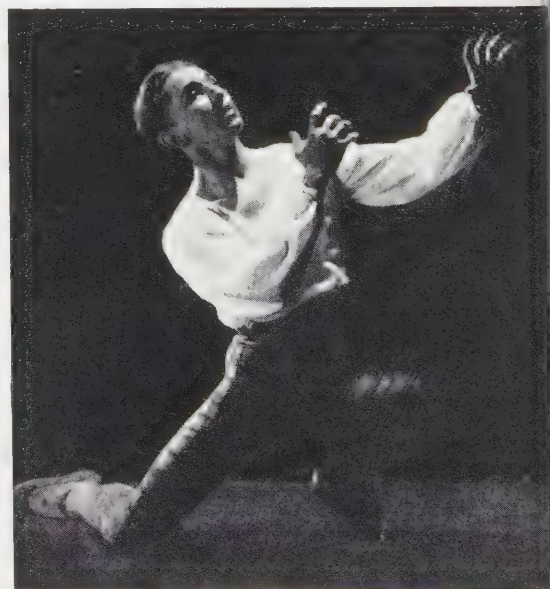
* Created roles.

(above) David Poole in the dual role of the prince and the beast in Cranko's "Beauty and the Beast" which he created with Patricia Miller. This remarkable picture was specially taken for "Ballet Today" by Dudley Harris, as was our cover picture of Poole as Jasper, the pot boy, in "Pineapple Poll."



(right) A dramatic moment from "The Haunted Ballroom" in which Poole plays the ill-fated Master of Treginnis.

(Photo: Denis de Marney)



in Dance

BY ELKA ALVAREZ

seen ballet before, was not particularly interested in it. But after the performance he felt quite differently.

"I was completely bowled over by what I saw" he says. "I remember that the performance included *Les Sylphides* and a ballet to part of Tchaikovsky's 'Theme and Variations' and it was like another world opening before me. Needless to say, the following week I volunteered to usher a second ballet performance that was taking place at the concert hall and found that it fascinated me just as much the second time."

Because he was particularly interested in drama, Poole was at this time a member of an amateur dramatic society which had a dance section attached to it. Hearing of his interest in ballet, the director of the latter invited him to join this section so that, she said "you can come and help lift the girls about"! "Any men," David told me with a grin, "were short in the dance section at that time." The dance section director also promised to find him a ballet teacher and, when she did so, he found to his pleasure that she was Miss Cecily Robinson, a very well-known South African teacher, who had trained and produced the ballet company he had seen perform at the Concert Hall.

Miss Robinson told him to come along to her weekly pas de deux class but when he got there he was terrified since he did not even know how to stand correctly, let alone dance, and all the other pupils seemed so advanced to him. Miss Robinson, who with her trained teacher's eye must have realised at once the young man's potentialities despite the late age he was commencing training, took a great interest in him immediately and suggested that it would probably help him if he came along a little time before each class to warm up. Gratefully, he took her advice. But as he progressed—and he did so astonishingly quickly—one class a week was not enough and he began to attend an elementary class as well twice a week. By this time, he found that school teaching was taking up far too much of his time, which he now realised he wanted to devote entirely to dancing. So since "my mother thought me completely mad to give up school teaching, but was willing for me to do so if dancing was what I really wanted,"

David took the plunge and ended his short school teaching career finally.

For the next 18 months he attended at least four long ballet classes a week and devoted every other minute to study and practise. He was now training with both Miss Robinson and Miss Dulcie Howes, another well-known teacher in Cape Town. At the end of that time, Dulcie Howes, impressed by his work, awarded him a ballet scholarship to go abroad to study and arranged for him to come to England to join the Sadler's Wells School immediately.

In February, 1947, Poole arrived in England to join the School, but his stay with them was short-lived. After two months training, a vacancy for an older man occurred in the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and such was the standard of his dancing that David was transferred into the Company, and accompanied it on its 1947 Spring tour. For six months he danced in the corps de ballet and then was given his first solo—Pierrot in *Carnaval*. Since then he has newly created and re-created a score of roles ranging from the haunted Master of Treginnis (originally created



In "Reflection" he dances the complicated role of Narcissus and here he is seen with Elaine Fifield as Echo.
(Photo: Denis de Marney)

by Robert Helpmann) in *The Haunted Ballroom* to the heart-rending Jasper, the pot boy, in *Pineapple Poll*. To both new and old roles he brings a most individual and dramatic interpretation which shows a complete unity of head, feet and, most important, the heart. Each role is lived separately. David Poole is gone. In his place is a new character, grave or gay, young or old, but always with a sparkle of wit and a twist of pathos, always with the true feeling of drama.

And that, I think, is the secret of Poole's success. He is first and foremost an actor—his history proves his strong interest in dramatics from an early age—an actor in dance, rather than, as with so many, a dancer who can act. To me, his most moving moment is when, in *Pineapple Poll*, Jasper, the only pathetic character in a lighthearted romp, walks across the stage in search of Poll who has spurned him. That is all he does—just walks across the stage and pauses for an instant looking hopefully towards the wings where she might have gone, but in that moment tears start to eyes as it is born on you how lonely and unloved Jasper is. And who is not touched by the sadness of the beast of whom the beauty is afraid in John Cranko's delicate little ballet *Beauty and the Beast*? Or is not struck by the strength of the skipper in *Sea Change* or the misery of Narcissus in *Reflection*?

Poole hopes eventually to do choreography and that is why he has been one of the prime movers in the "Sunday Choreographers" which we announced

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(Photo: Denis de Marney)

Wistful, pathetic, entirely loveable, Jasper, the pot boy, pauses from his labours for an instant. His creation of this character in "Pineapple Poll" made many new admirers for David Poole's artistry.

ART APPRECIATION FOR DANCERS (No. 1)

by
GLADYS LASKY

B.A. (Hons.) Lond. History of Art
Miss Lasky has created history in her own sphere by becoming the first British ballet teacher to take a history of art degree. Her research into the subject has led her all over Europe and the results of her investigations have added considerably to the knowledge of the history of ballet.

AN understanding of the other arts is essential for the dancer. Music is usually taken for granted as a second study, since it is an obvious sister-art. But the visual arts are neglected. Their appreciation will enhance the dancer's approach to, and interpretation of, her art. Now that ballet companies make extensive overseas tours the ballet student has every chance of seeing the masterpieces—and lesser works—of painting, sculpture and architecture when he or she eventually graduates into one of the big companies. Enjoyment of these works will be greatly increased if some knowledge of them is possessed beforehand.

First of all it should be realised that we cannot all like the acknowledged masterpieces; this fact does not mean that art is not for us. The usual objection is that they are all religious in theme. The alternative seems to be a portrait of someone of whom we have never heard. There are reasons for this.

Until recent years the painter was not free-lance, as now, but depended for his livelihood on receiving commissions. The biggest patron was the church; a Catholic church has a painted altarpiece in every little chapel, of which there are many. Before the days of printed books and widespread literacy the Bible was unfolded in the shape of wall paintings, usually executed *a fresco*, that is, when the plaster wall-surface was still fresh and moist. The Sistine Chapel in Rome is one of the most famous chapels so decorated; even the ceiling is painted.

House walls were usually hung with tapestries, not with pictures; they were warm as well as decorative. Sometimes portraits were ordered by wealthy

The Approach to Pictures

private patrons, but more often they show groups of members of a trade guild.

In case these two types of subject matter do not interest us, let us look for other things in these same pictures. If we are intrigued by costume, much pleasure may be obtained from observing not only changes of style, but also detail of cut, colour, and cloth. Fashions changed in centuries gone by too. We will find wedge-heels, plucked eyebrows, and quite modern sandals! It was common for the donor, the person who financed the painting to be given to the church, often in memory of a dead

relation, to be represented together with the Saints and the Holy Family. Yet another thing to look for.

When you go to your local Museum and Art Gallery, do not attempt to "do" the whole collection in one visit. Go with a purpose—the works of a particular period or country, facts about deportment, costume or hair-styling; and remember, these are more likely to be contemporary with the artists than historically accurate. Your visit will then be short and rewarding. Wear comfortable shoes; and come away *before* you are physically and mentally tired.

No. 2 NEXT MONTH



This picture is the altarpiece "Coronation of the Virgin" by Fra Angelico (1387-1455). Note the dancing angels, the musical instruments and the hair plaited round the head.



Young members of the Bournemouth Ballet Club receive ballet instruction from Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet dancer Pirmin Trecu (on right).

(Photo: Bournemouth Times)

membership is over 130.

The Club caters for three categories of members and once a month meetings are held at the Municipal College (kindly lent by the Education Authorities) at

which a lecture—specially for non-dancers—a simple class for Juniors and a more advanced one for Student members is given.

The long list of well-known personalities who have lectured and taught for the Club includes such well-known ballet names picked as Madame Rambert, Madame Kyasht, Miss Peggy van Praagh, David Poole, Bert Stimmel, Sigurd Leeder, Algeranoff and others.

Three very successful performances have so far been staged by Club members and eight original ballets have been produced. Another production is being planned for this season and it is hoped that one of the new ballets will be arranged by a visiting choreographer.

The Club is honoured to have for its President Dame Ninette de Valois and it is hoped that she will visit the Club this season.

All enquiries about membership or the Club's activities should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Bournemouth Ballet Club, 29 The Avenue, Branksome Park, Bournemouth.

WHENEVER a ballet company is performing at Bournemouth, the Bournemouth Ballet Club gives a tea party for its dancers, each club member inviting a dancer as his or her special guest. These parties have been, and the Club hopes will continue to be, the means of making most friendly and satisfying contact between artists and public.

This is one of the interesting and unusual activities in which the Bournemouth Club, just five years old, specialises. Its dates for 1952-53 include lectures and classes by Felicity Gray, Joan Wildblood, Mary Skeaping, Phyllis Bedells, Errol Addison and Pirmin Trecu; a demonstration on "The Art of Make-up" by a member of Leichner's staff, a party for members of the International Ballet Company, a new year party and a visit to Southampton to see the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

In 1947 when Miss Joan Lawson came to lecture at the inaugural meeting there were only 21 members. Since then the Club has prospered and now

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NOVERRE AND MODERN BALLET

scheme of fire-precautions to obviate that constant bane of eighteenth century theatres, destruction by fire, and in 1770 he wrote some 'Observations sur la Construction d'une Nouvelle Salle de L'Opéra.'

The impact Noverre made on his time was considerable. He contributed to the 'Encyclopaedia,' and was held in respect by both princes and philosophers. The aged Voltaire, from the seclusion of Ferney, wrote with enthusiasm: 'vous êtes un Prométhée' and 'vous me transformez en jeune homme.' For a time at the Court of the young Frederick the Great, Noverre was later ballet master to the spendthrift Duke of Wurtemberg. The prodigality of the latter, and his patronage of Noverre, is reminiscent of that of Wagner by mad Duke Ludwig in the following century. In similar fashion, his megalomaniac schemes were abruptly terminated by the threat of a palace revolt, and Noverre subsequently moved to Paris where he became acquainted with Gluck and Mozart, who was a frequent dining companion.

Continued from page 8

In strong contrast to the near fabulous reputation which Noverre enjoyed as a choreographer in his own time is the oblivion which has today engulfed his ballets, if not his principles. The reason for the posthumous eclipse of 'the Shakespeare of the Dance' is not far to seek, and the fate that awaited the great choreographer was perhaps sensed by himself when he wrote to Voltaire:

"Il serait bien à désirer sans doute de pouvoir transmettre à la postérité à l'aide de certains signes . . . les grâces et les contours de la danse—ces talens précieux sont éphémères."

Owing to the absence of any system of choreographic notation the ballets of Noverre, although composed but two centuries ago, apart from the skeleton structure of the plots, are as dead and incapable of recreation for subsequent generations as the lost books of Livy or the language of the Etruscans.

Rousseau first anatomised the passions which animated man, and showed his real nature, unobscured by the social mask of conventional behaviour. It is

Noverre's great contribution to the Dance that he likewise freed it from the deadwood of the past, abolishing masks in more than a simply literal sense, and enabled it to express the whole cycle of human emotions. Noverre, like Rousseau, constantly emphasised the 'importance of Nature, 'the sole model I have looked upon,' and was against 'the mere execution of steps with a monotonous regularity'—he would have had no use for the type of ballet which consists simply of gymnastic gyrations.

On Noverre's conception of the 'action ballet,' his idea of ballet as an art unifying the other arts, music, painting and poetry—he frequently referred to his ballets as 'pictures' and 'poems'—much of the ballet of today has been founded. One can imagine the demoniac little man viewing with satisfaction many of the ballets of Diaghileff, The Sadler's Wells Ballet or the Ballet de Champs Elysées, and regarding himself with justification as in some sense their creator.

Ballet Theatre's New York Season

by Hope Sheridan

ALICIA ALONSO, Igor Youskevitch, John Kriza and Mary Ellen Moylan returned with Ballet Theatre and its company of 125 to the Metropolitan Opera House on September 25, to raise the curtain on the American dance company's 14th season, a three-week engagement. This is to be Ballet Theatre's only New York engagement this season, and as such, the company made it an opportunity to show New York audiences that they had regained much of their lost brilliance. Many youngsters who were fledgling soloists of the last two years, have risen in stature, and are showing themselves as potential star performers.

The curtain rose on a *Les Sylphides* that could only be described as 'tentative.' None of the atmosphere nor the musicality, so essentially a part of this ballet, was to be found. Ruth Ann Koesun performed Prelude adequately, nothing more. Alicia Alonso danced the mazurka with her accustomed speed, and was truly enchanting in the supported adagio of the waltz. But it was left to young Paula Lloyd to provide the real surprise of the evening with a beautiful waltz. Miss Lloyd seems to have developed by leaps and bounds within the last year and a half.

America has seen only a few of Roland Petit's ballets, but of those few two impressions generally remain with me: that I have seen an exciting piece of theatre; and that on renewed occasions the whole thing is inclined to look rather shoddy, with all its choreographic holes gaping. This is not true, however, of the long ballet Ballet Theatre acquired from Petit several seasons back, *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*. Petit's ballet about the cat who becomes a girl through human love, and is responsible for her sweetheart's death high atop the roofs of Paris, continues to provide those so rare moments of fantasy, and poignancy. In the leading role, Mary Ellen Moylan creates an Agatha wholly believable in mood and dramatic compulsion. As her human lover, John Kriza is provided with a role that is physically dangerous as well as demanding.

The novelty of the opening programme



Massine Creates "Laudes Evangelii" in Perugia

Taken at a rehearsal, this photograph shows part of the Crown of Thorns scene when the mockers are clustered round Christ (played by Angelo Pietri, seated).

Leonide Massine, who makes his summer home in Italy, undertook for the first time a production for the "Sagra Musicale Umbra," the annual festival of ancient and modern music, which was held from Sept. 20-29.

Massine, in collaboration with Valentino Bucchi, a young Italian composer and Enzo Rossi, a Sicilian artist, has created a modern "Laudes Evangelii," an hour long spectacle based on the Life and Passion of Jesus Christ.

Each of the seven scenes—Annunciation, Birth, Flight to Egypt, Garden of Gethsemane, Way of the Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension—lasting from six to twelve minutes, was tableaubed by a ballet of fifty dancers.

Performed in the stark beauty of the vast San Domenico (which holds 3,000)

where a special stage was built before the altar and splendid apse window of stained glass, it stressed the aim of the "Sagra Musicale Umbra"—that music presented in a harmonious setting gives rise to spiritual benefits.

Leonide Massine, who rehearsed the dancers in a hill-top villa in the small fishing village of Positano (Bay of Salerno) says this production is for him of special interest as it takes him back to 1914 and the beginning of his career. The first choreographic work he ever composed was a "Christ Passion" based on the Russian Orthodox text, in collaboration with Igor Stravinsky. Before it could be presented the first world war intervened, causing the disbanding of the Diaghilev Ballet and the work was never presented.

was the revival by David Lichine of his popular *Graduation Ball*, with himself and Tatiana Riabouchinska as guest artists in the roles they created many years ago. It is good to see Lichine and Riabouchinska performing the chief junior cadet and junior girl again. They bring to the ballet an effervescence and naivete which have been lacking for too long a time. Americans seem to possess the necessary ebullience but all too often can not really make believe.

On September 26, Markova returned to the Ballet Theatre stage as guest artist, dancing her most famous role of *Giselle*, and partnered by Igor Youskevitch. Personally I found it quite a shock seeing her *Giselle* once again after an absence of approximately five years to discover that although I like it, Markova's performance is not the thing of enchantment I so vividly remember and that in the course of years, I have grown to prefer a different interpretation. As far as mood and phrasing are

concerned, Markova's is a magnificent *Giselle*. I'm sure that she is the closest conception to Taglioni the 20th century will ever see . . . but remember that it was a hot blooded Grisi, for which *Giselle* was first designed! I feel that the romantic, passionate and very much alive young girl of Alonso's Act I contains the greater validity.

A very believable *Giselle* can be found in the growing characterization of Alicia Alonso, who, performance after performance, seems to be discovering further nuances to the role and projecting them without reducing the technical requirements of the role or slowing the pace of the virtuoso variations. Igor Youskevitch, who danced the role of Albrecht with Markova on September 26 and with Alonso on October 2, gave two completely different and superb performances to suit the requirements of each ballerina.

The first premiere of the season, Agnes De Mille's new ballet, *The Harvest According*, was presented on Octo-

BALLETS TODAY continued

the very simplicity of which left their audience in no doubt that the synchronisation of movement was not nearly so easy to do as it looked! Painted pastel shades from head to foot, the bodies of the three dancers were only visible in parts throughout most of the ballet since a hanging screen moved constantly up and down in front of them, exposing at one moment their legs, at another their hands, and so on. The result was a sensation! It is good to see Gore and Hinton back and to feel the edge of their humour and artistry once more.

Five Variations with a Theme, danced by Josephine Gordon, Raymond Ray and Johaar Mosaval, was an interesting experiment in choreography with some very lovely and graceful movements from Josephine Gordon.

I'm afraid that *Bagatelle* left me rather cold and I chiefly remember the heavy breathing of the three dancers (Sonya Hana, June Leighton and Terry Gilbert) as they flung themselves energetically about the stage. P.F.

Davis Theatre, Croydon. October 6. *The Three Cornered Hat*, *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Act II), *pas de deux* (*Giselle* Act I), *Facade*.

Sadler's Wells Ballet opened their season at Croydon with a most exciting performance of *The Three Cornered Hat*. Alexander Grant can seldom have been seen to better advantage than in the role of the Miller. Virile and intense in movement, his solo brought warm applause from a packed auditorium. When he achieves, in addition, the taut neatness of execution that Massine

brought to the role, Grant's Miller will be outstanding. Violetta Elvin looked beautiful enough as the Miller's Wife to have made her husband's jealousy readily understandable. Her arm movements had a fluid and lovely expressiveness, and all her footwork was neat and vivacious.

Le Lac des Cygnes (Act II) was performed against a most depressingly murky back-cloth resembling nothing so much as a mud-pool on Dartmoor, and on an exceedingly noisy stage, requiring an act of faith on the part of the audience, when every swan sounded like a poltergeist. Margot Fonteyn, looking a trifle tired after her Berlin appearances, gave a remarkably pure interpretation of Odette, so completely devoid of the least element of technical error that it was easy to believe she was indeed not human, but enchanted. Her line was crystal clear, and her head and neck movements supple and expressive of the swan's graceful preening.

Nadia Nerina and Brian Shaw danced the *pas de deux* from *Giselle* with great charm and vivacity. Nerina is dancing with much more confidence since her return from South Africa, and she has broadened her gestures to embrace a larger auditorium.

Facade is chiefly valuable for introducing to us the new names amongst the Company's dancers, and for renewing our acquaintance with some of the older ones. Leslie Edwards' Fox Trot must surely be the most deliriously funny thing he has ever done, and Pauline Clayden's Polka every bit as wickedly witty as the choreographer intended. M.E.R.

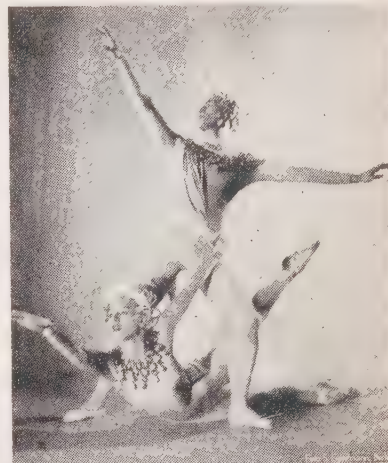
ber 1. Music by Virgil Thomson, scenery and costumes by Lemuel Ayers provided a rich background for De Mille's choreography. Based on the lines by Walt Whitman, "Life, Life is the tillage . . . And death is the harvest according" the ballet is divided into three sections entitled 'Birth,' 'Games,' and 'The Harvest.' Danced effectively by soloists Gemze de Lappe, Liane Plane, Ruth Ann Koesun, Jenny Workman, and Kelly Brown, backed up by fine work of the corps de ballet, it would be nice to say that Agnes De Mille has created a work of some consequence. Actually, Miss De Mille has produced a ballet which appears to be a pudding of every ballet she has ever done in musical comedy. There are the children from *Carousel*, the Civil War ballet from *Bloomer Girl*, and so on. All the gestures, the movements, the on stage crossings . . . exactly as we have seen them all before . . . with none of the final choreographic invention of a

Balanchine, say, using the same classic steps. The group work is excellent, but the work for the soloists, with the exception of the Games sequence, is very thin. A dance for young boys in the Games, in which all balance on their heads and hands, feet in the air, simulating steps to a marked rhythm, is the most exciting part of the ballet.

The other premiere, Edward Caton's *Triptych* to music by Johannes Brahms took place on the following night, October 2. This ballet is also divided into three parts. Part I, Hungarian Dances, is by far the best and is ably danced by Liane Plane, Jenny Workman, Jack Beaber, William Burdick, and Enrique Martinez. At best, *Triptych* may provide a pleasant interlude when pulled together, but it will never be an important addition to the repertoire.

It may be said that financially and artistically Ballet Theatre is having a better season that it has had for the past three years.

S. Gordon Joseph on Germany



(Photo: S. Enkelmann)

Gisela Deege and Gert Reinholm in "Apollo Musagete."

The classical ballet is favoured in Berlin and the most popular company in the western sectors of the city is that of the Städtische Oper. Gustav Blank is choreographer, although supporters of Tatiana Gsovsky have for some time past been hoping for a change, preferring to see their champion occupy this position. Gsovsky, formerly ballet-mistress, went to Buenos Aires as guest choreographer. Now she is back in Berlin again.

Nevertheless, Blank has an impressive array of successes behind him including Stravinsky's *Firebird*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and the premiere of *Lysistrata* by Blacher, an important ballet-composer we have already come across in connection with the German version of *Hamlet*. The chief dancers of the company are Liselotte Köster, Suse Preisser, Lilo Herbeth, Maria Litto and, among the men, Jockel Stahl, Rainer Köchermann and Ermin Bredow. Liselotte Köster and Jockel Stahl are to tour the United States next year.

The great event of Berlin last month was the International Ballet Festival which opened the new season. To this, Sadler's Wells and Ram Gopal were invited, besides Spanish dancers. At the time of going to press, the Festival was still in the future, so it is not possible to give a report at this stage. However, among German contributions Harald Kreutzberg was expected to take part.

The Städtische Oper was to offer *Turandot* under Gustav Blank and Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* under choreographer Jens Keith. Rival Tatiana Gsovsky was to present the debut of her newly-formed ballet group in Stravinsky's *Apollo Musagete*.

Ballet . . . PHYSICAL or MUSICAL?

PART IV

BY FERDINAND REYNA

HERE, in all probability, is the origin of ballet, which was not created to amuse the courtiers and idlers, but which arose from an aesthetic necessity parallel to the one which determined the evolution of music. Just as the sonata, and later the symphony, were born from putting several pieces of music together, so ballet is derived from the union of different tunes, joined together in a dance, with a vocabulary of steps and positions which keeps on being enriched, and which owes nothing either to popular dances or to the court dance. It was henceforth a creative art, autonomous with its technique. Artistically, it was the sixteenth century which contributed to the launching of ballet in Europe. In fact, from the end of the fifteenth century the dance is found in Italy in the most varied forms. We find dancing inserted in the *Orfeo* of Poliziano, a first attempt at opera, performed in Mantua in 1471. And we find the ballet, perhaps in the shape of an *intermezzo* between the acts of a play à l'antique, perhaps on its own, in the form of a dramatic pantomime, mythological or fictitious, under the name of *moresque* in the court spectacles. And soon the interpreters of these pantomimes adopted the technique of the *maître de ballet*.

Master Isacchino composed the dances for the first performance of the celebrated pastoral *Il Pastor Fido*, (The faithful shepherd), by Guarini. *Le Combat d'Apollon avec le Python*, music by Luca Marenzio, verses by Ottavio Rinuccini, which was a part of the famous Florentine *intermezzi* of 1589, was danced five times, without counting the grotesque dances of the *Commedia dell'Arte*, and the equestrian and military ballets, arranged choreographically.

Just as the opera was born from the necessity to dramatise music and song, so a dramatic content was soon inserted in the ballet. But, opera is not the whole of music; nor is dramatic ballet the whole of ballet. We have purely musical ballets, like those of George Balanchine, which are even more linked with the spirit of the music, because this choreographer always expresses himself by musical *nuances* of the dance, and never by expressive gesture alone. For which reason he seems to us the most classical of our choreographers, and the most faithful to the musical origins of ballet.

It is understood that by musical ballet we do not mean a simple mounting of academic steps to a musical score, but a choreographic interpretation, which is, in fact, an independent creation although faithful to the spirit of the composer. An example of this type of ballet is *Serenade*, by Tchaikowsky-Balanchine, where the romantic thoughts

of the Russian composer have been transposed with an ease of invention quite free of anecdote; yet which, on the visual plane, arouses in us the same emotions as the Tchaikovsky work.

It would be childish, and outside our purpose, to discuss here the problem of the independence or the priority of the dance over music, or *vice versa*. In the passion which some choreographers display in the defence of dance *versus*



An illustration of a dance movement in the treatise "Gratie d'Amore" of Cesare Negri published at the end of the 16th century.

music one may discern perhaps a timidity or even a subconscious fear when they are confronted with that collaborator who is so often demanding, but who does not surpass the choreographer, seeing that he does not know how to treat her as an equal, with a respect that does not exclude independence. Bizet and George Balanchine in *Le Palais de Cristal* (Symphony in C), are elated and increase their stature reciprocally, both choreographer and musician being on the same level of greatness.

The sixteenth century is also very important in the development of ballet, because it ends with the work of the two great masters: Cesare Negri and Fabrizio Caroso. Their books do not contain only the theory of court dances, but also some forty lessons with rules and the complete doctrine of a very rational and rich school. One finds in the technique they expound about eighty steps; ten kinds of turns, including the double-turn *en l'air*; twenty-five kinds of *cabriole*. The turn-out is demanded, as well as a fully-stretched knee and foot. The two masters talk about the five fundamental steps on which the entire dance is based, and which become, later, the five positions. One also finds, it is true, in their treatises, simple court dances, but separated from the ballets,

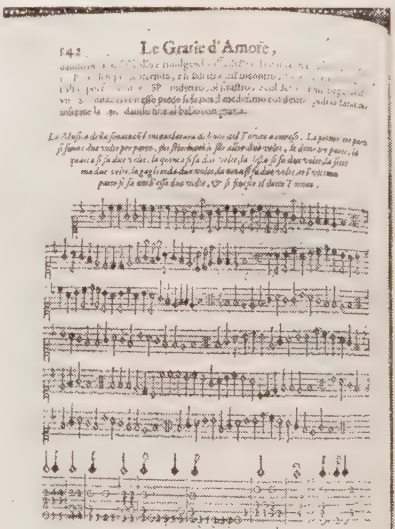
which were quite a different thing, and which needed an entirely different study, from the composer as well as from the executants.

These two masters had instructed a *pléiade* of other masters who taught professional dancers, who used their methods for ballets in the theatre. It is thus an historical error to consider *Le Ballet Comique de la Reine* as the first ballet, for the origins of this art are far older and very different.

France in her turn, during the seventeenth century, took in hand the fortunes of the academic dance, and her illustrious *maîtres de ballet* pruned it, refined it, and gave it that noble style which we still admire today. But with Caroso, Negri and Lulli we are already a long way from the origins of ballet.

Until now, it seems to me, ballet history has been written without any real method, leaving gaps which have not yet been filled. Too often what R. P. Menestrier and the Abbé du Bos wrote in the seventeenth century is merely repeated. But these men were totally ignorant of the history of the middle ages and the renaissance, as we know it today, and did not yet have means of research. There exist magnificent histories of painting, and it is possible to follow the development of this art either as a whole or period by period. So far as the history of ballet is concerned, everything is much more vague; we proceed on hypotheses. The art of ballet has the right, in our time, to its own history, complete, accurate and scientific, like painting, music and all the other arts. A publisher who undertook such a labour would be rendering an immense service to ballet and to culture in general.

THE END



The first page of the music for the lute in the ballet "Le Tournoi d'Amour" which was also included in Cesare Negri's treatise.

all previous records for attendance.

On July 1 we went to Pretoria, spending two days there and giving one performance of each programme at the Capitol Theatre. Then to Pietermaritzburg for two days, giving two performances at the Grand Theatre.

Next we flew to Cape Town where we were scheduled to give five performances (one more than was originally planned because of public demand) commencing on July 8 at the Alhambra Theatre. Alas, Nadia was suddenly stricken down with a gastric complaint, which was at first thought to be appendicitis, and taken to hospital, and the first performance had to be cancelled. So we opened on July 10 with Nadia dancing against doctor's orders looking and feeling very "groggy" indeed while an anxious doctor stood in the wings in case she collapsed! However, she managed to cope and we gave three more performances on July 11, 12 and 13 as arranged.

Southern Rhodesia was our next port of call and we flew to Bulawayo where we gave one performance at the Palace Theatre—and also managed to find time to visit the famous Motopo Hills where Cecil Rhodes is buried. Then to Salisbury, where we did three performances and during our few off-duty hours were taken to see the tobacco being produced.

On to Durban for a week to give five performances at the Criterion Theatre, where the first hour of our opening night was somewhat marred by three power failures—two of which occurred in the middle of the *Coppelia* pas de deux! And thence to Johannesburg again for the climax of our tour. Here, in eight days, we gave 11 performances dancing with Johannesburg's two leading amateur ballet companies alternately. But before the season opened, there was a good deal of rehearsal to be done. Six of the performances were with the Festival Ballet Society, run by Miss Marjorie Sturman, and the production was the full-length *Le Lac des Cygnes* with full company and the leading roles danced by us. A good deal of cutting and re-arrangement was necessary but the overall result was a very good one—of high standard especially considering that all the dancers except us were amateurs and could only rehearse and practise in their spare time. And some of them had precious little of that—why, one of them was a doctor, another a schoolteacher, a third a bank clerk and so on.

The other five performances were given with the Ballet Theatre Company,

You Say . . .

I do like BALLET TODAY's new presentation; it certainly is more attractive than the old one. The enlarged size has been well put to use with interesting articles; and I must voice my admiration for whoever chooses your photographs. Ballet is an art is so precise and exact that no ballet at all is better than sloppy ballet. And so it must be with the photographs; all the ones you have published were chosen in good taste to reveal not only the beauty of line but all the other fine points of art.

Rod Quiros.

Ballet Book Shop,
20 West Jackson Blvd,
Chicago 4, Illinois, U.S.A.

He Knew the First Eros

I was very interested in the photograph you published in the September issue of *Madame Kysht* and *Miss Unity More* in the *Sylvia* of 1911. My first real ballet was the 1906 *Coppelia* (Adeline Genée) and later the *Le Lac des Cygnes* with Lydia Kysht, but 1911 brought Diaghileff which rather overshadowed memories of *Sylvia*.

I had the pleasure of meeting Madame Kysht and her daughter often during 1940/44 and have seen them at times since, but *Miss Unity More* was the ward, I think, of one of my mother's particular friends, Miss Rosetta Benbow, a descendant of the Admiral. I can recall that *Miss More* had one of her first dances when a dancer whose name escapes me sprained an ankle dancing on a table in a ballet at the Alhambra. She was the first dancer I met backstage and *Miss Phyllis Bedells* a little later

and here we danced the principal roles in *Les Sylphides* with members of the company, and with original set by Benois, and gave two pas de deux—from *Coppelia* and *Giselle*—and *Le Spectre de la Rose*. The company also performed *Prince Igor* and two "local" ballets by Arnold Dover called *Merry Wives* and *Shore Leave*.

After the Old Vic season, on August 1, we opened with our dual programme at His Majesty's Theatre, Johannesburg. This is the only theatre in the city that has "live" shows all the time and no films, and is about the size of the Sadler's Wells Theatre. There was no doubt that the whole season (from August 1-9) was an unqualified success and we both enjoyed working with the very enthusiastic people in the two South African companies.

was the first dancer I met in my mother's drawingroom.

Norman Welton.

58 Wolseley Road,
Crouch End, London, N.8.

Dancer-Artist

The little drawing you reproduced on page 21 of your August issue from the notepaper of a Chicago correspondent, deserves a by-line. It is the work of George Verdak, who does such drawings as a sideline to his main occupation—a dancer in the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. For the past few years he has been designing Christmas cards with such figures as the basis—at first it was just a few for himself and fellow-members of the Ballet Russe—but since a year or two ago, he has been printing them on a more commercial scale. George, incidentally, is a Chicago boy.

And while we are on the subject of dancing balloons, I seem to recall Ruthanna Boris telling us that the balloons that were originally released during her ballet *Cirque de deux* had to be abandoned, because of their unfortunate habit of returning to the stage a ballet or two later!

Fraser Macdonald.

110 Maitland Street,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.



Two "Ballet for Beginners" programmes are already scheduled on television for the new season. The first, on October 20, will have taken place by the time this issue is published and will be reviewed in the December issue. During the series the middle part of *Petrouchka* will be danced with Michel de Lutry as *Petrouchka*, Walter Gore as the Moor and Domini Callaghan as the Ballerina.

The Johannesburg Gala over, we flew straight to Port Elizabeth and gave two performances there, reverting, of course, to our original "a" and "b" programmes and on August 14 arrived in East London where we did one show at the Colosseum Theatre. Our last performance was in Bloemfontein and we made one appearance there on August 16.

We had given 40 performances in two months in 11 theatres! We both felt as if we needed a holiday! (Nadia managed to have one—spending 10 days on the Natal coast but Alexis returned immediately to England.) Before we left, we promised African Consolidated Theatres that we would make another tour in 1955—2½ years time. We shall both look forward to it since we enjoyed every minute of our two months' tour.

THE AFRICAN DANCE

by Margaret Sharp

OPENED by the Right Hon. The Earl of Munster, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, Mr. Ben Enwonwu's exhibition of paintings, pastels and sculpture at Galerie Apollinaire will interest all who follow the dance. A Nigerian, who studied art at the Slade and was appointed Art Adviser to the Nigerian Government in 1948, Mr. Enwonwu combines in his art the civilisation of the West and the mysticism, power and superstition of his native Africa.

In his dancing figures, the lyrical flow of line allied to the sensuous black surface of polished ebony is exciting, both in the full-length dancing women and in the bust of a dancing girl (18) with arms clasped above her head. He does not, however, confine himself only to ebony, but uses also mahogany, walnut, elm wood and opepe wood; in the latter, I liked, particularly, the figure "Dance" which was full of vitality and rhythmic grace. His portrait heads are fine pieces of work in the traditional manner, and for them he uses ebony, mahogany and bronze with equal success.

On the whole, the paintings are rather less satisfying than the sculpture but, even so, they afford us a fascinat-

ing glimpse of the varied aspect of African dancing. In a series of Expressionist paintings of dancers he conveys powerfully the mass-movement and rhythm of tribal dancing, and in "Dance Movements" one is reminded of the link between the ancient dances of Africa and our own modern ball-room dancing.

At the Tate Gallery, large crowds queued to see the exhibition of paintings, pastels and bronzes by Edgar Degas, organised by the Arts Council and the Edinburgh Festival Society. The famous bronze of a fourteen year old dancer is attracting much attention and if the blue hair ribbon is faded, the tarlatan grey with the dust of time, the serene expression of the young girl has a timeless beauty. As a sculptor Degas infuses life into an inanimate substance and one waits with a feeling almost of expectancy for the slim bronze figures to continue the movements of the dance.

Brilliant scintillating colour assaults the senses in the oils and pastels of the later period but does not obscure Degas's genius as a draughtsman, a draughtsmanship that is the foundation of his art.

The United Society of Artists Exhibition at the R.B.A. Galleries in Suffolk

tra will play for him! He takes with him three ballets new to South Africa—*Sea Change, Beauty and the Beast* and *Les Rendezvous* and will also dance in the third act of *Casse Noisette*.

Off-duty, Poole confesses that he has few interests beyond his work but admits to a great love of cooking. Also he collects gramophone records—mostly Mozart and Haydn—and dreads the day when someone should attempt to set a ballet to the well-known works of either of these composers. "Their music is perfect in itself—it shouldn't be danced to," he says. Although he has no actual hobbies, David is extremely interested in the other theatre arts, especially symphony concerts and plays, and he is also an avid reader.

He has strong and interesting views on ballet and on its treatment and reception both by artists and public. "Ballet is an art form" he says and feels that today's ballet has too narrow an outlook. There is, he has noticed, always a demand for the very "obvious" type of ballet but finds that often when audiences need to use both their minds and their imaginations more than usual in order to appreciate and understand it, the ballet presented to them is not nearly so popular as the "favourites,"

Street is a mixed bag. Alan Chisholm's "Can-Can Dancer" lacks character and might well be a portrait of a woman in fancy dress; Olive I. Williams's Spanish dancers in "A Tavern in Barcelona" are vividly portrayed against the dull café background.

Two slight but charming watercolours, "Orchestra Pit, Alhambra," and "Ballet at the Alhambra" by Spencer F. Gore, who was, with the exception of Sickert, probably the most gifted of the Camden Town Group, afforded us a fleeting glimpse of pre-first-war London at the Leicester Galleries "Artists of Fame and Promise" Exhibition.

LIMELIGHT

Our film correspondent tells us of the outstandingly good ballet sequence in Charlie Chaplin's new film "Limelight." In a harlequin and columbine ballet, dancer Melissa Hayden (of the New York City Ballet) takes the place of actress Claire Bloom, who plays a ballet dancer in the film. She is partnered by Andre Eglevsky and both give very fine performances. Choreography of the ballet is by Hayden, Eglevsky and Charlie Chaplin himself and there are some very unusual shots of the dancing sequence including one superb one taken from the "flies" of the stage in which the ballerina is seen from above.

though often much stronger choreographically.

He has noticed, too, that audiences, and even one or two professional critics, are very often swayed by their personal likes and dislikes of the artists rather than by the quality of their dancing at any particular performance. What is sometimes decried with one dancer or a company is wholeheartedly accepted with another. In his opinion, the same standards should be applied to all forms of art whether the participants are amateur, professional, subsidised or just plain commercial!

Whether he be like the sad-eyed Jasper on our cover or the cringing beast who becomes the handsome prince on page 14, Poole creates for his many admirers a fresh and interesting character with each new role he undertakes. There is no doubt that, when they see him dance again in Cape Town after six years, his former teachers and colleagues will be astonished and delighted with the progress he has made and feel proud that he has joined the ranks of South African dancers, which include Nadia Nerina, Alexis Rassiné, Maryon Lane, Patricia Miller, John Cranko and many others, who have made a valuable and indispensable contribution to the ballet of today.

MEET DAVID POOLE

Continued from page 15

last issue. The idea, he tells me, came from much discussion among dancers of both Sadler's Wells Companies and eventually emerged the plan which is now being followed: namely that aspiring choreographers in both Companies shall have a chance to create ballets which dancers of the Companies, on the whole not leading ones, will interpret. Already, the first programme is being worked on and David is extremely upset that in all probability he will miss the first show, because his forthcoming visit to South Africa will keep him away until the end of January.

Going home for the first time in six years—he has not seen his family for all that time—is very exciting for him and added to it is the interest of the appearances he has been invited to make with the Cape Town University Ballet Company by his old teacher, Miss Dulcie Howes, while he is there. As readers will have read last issue, Poole will rehearse the Company (which is, of course, entirely amateur) for two months and then give eight performances with them. And he will perform in the very Concert Hall in which he saw his first ballet and the same orches-

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(Photo : Derek Allen)

PHOTO GALLERY No. 8 — NOVEMBER, 1952

Violetta Elvin as La Morte Amoureuse in "Don Juan"